

SECURITY INFORMATION

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18 February 1952

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: BGFIEND Discussions with []

1. During the course of [] recent visit to Washington for reassignment I was able to discuss the FIEND Project with him for approximately an hour and one half on January 30th and the same amount of time on the following day. From this memorandum of conversation it will be apparent that three hours unfortunately proved insufficient for a detailed survey of the project. Nonetheless some valuable knowledge was transmitted to the FIEND Washington Staff which helps give us a better picture of the FIEND Project in Athens -- its capabilities, limitations, and its current status.

2. Fundamentally [] was very optimistic about the project and its future. He felt lessons learned to date could be profitably used because an excellent well-rounded staff devoted to [] had been welded into a smoothly operating unit and had sufficient experience to carry out successful operations in 1952. Of course everything was admittedly dependent upon locating satisfactory agent material, but [] felt this problem could be solved by BGFIEND recruitment in Greece and by the ZRELOPE recruitment program. (See the [] Dispatch on this subject for details).

3. In respect to current operations [] reported the Willow Team operations to Korcha had been forced back because of winter weather but they were scheduled for infiltration as soon as the weather moderated and the snow began to thaw. The same applies to the Pine Contact Mission. [] had originally planned to use some of the same personnel to contact Pine that were being used on Willow but this operation was also temporarily postponed. [] did not know the political complexion of the contact team members but stated [] fully realized the necessity of assigning a man of stature and judgement to the team [] was optimistic over Pine's eventual return to Albania in the Spring and their present loyalty to BGFIEND. He reviewed his impression of Pine received during their training period, their above average character and judgement, and a recent conversation with Muharem Bajraktari. All confirm his belief they are not under control though he would not venture an opinion about their loyalty by April. Nor did [] believe there were any difficulties between the original team members and the W/T operators. In discussing Winter operations I mentioned my feeling we should closely look into the opportunities for such operations. [] replied both he and [] felt strongly that winter months presented good opportunities because the Sigurimi were not prone to leave heated barracks and recommended further consideration

of this idea.

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of this idea.

4. [] was not fully aware of the extent of the existing disagreement between FIEND and Valuable but did confirm [] liaison had not been properly maintained by [] who was apparently being undercut by []

5. Regarding 1952 operations [] reported he favored a number of air infiltrations despite their shortcomings but was not speaking for [] on the matter. However, he did refer me to a January Athens meeting on Air Operations which reviewed the problem. [] is preparing a full report on this meeting and we have asked to be included on the routing.

6. Although no reports have been received on BGBEGOOD drops [] was enthusiastic about the program and felt it would be a serious mistake to cease Flour Drops until we had reports on these drops from inside Albania.

7. HTGRUBBY broadcasts are reaching Albania - confirmed by a visit of [] to the border area where he actually heard HTGRUBBY but no reaction had been received as yet to broadcasts.

8. [] explained that the intelligence support of BGFIEND operations still had some distance to go to be adequate but was steadily improving. However, despite shortcomings [] felt the files represented the best available collection of information on the subject and included such data as minefield maps of the Albanian side of the Greek-Albanian border. Interrogation of refugees is being improved upon by close adherence to the questionnaire.

9. [] reported that [] was at variance with Germany over the type of training being conducted by the German Training Staff which did not lay proper emphasis on survival and agent type training. A dispatch on the subject has been written and [] hopes to see the day when all our agent training is under our control in Greece or some other area under our jurisdiction.

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[]
Chief, SE/PC/1

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